

# Accessory Structures

All residential accessory structures including “temporary” storage or carport structures are regulated in the same manner as site-constructed “permanent” accessory structures on residential property. The City of Shoreline Development Code and the International Residential Code define specifically which structures are subject to the permitting and the location standards..

## Permit Requirements

If the structure is over 200 square feet or attached to another structure, a building permit is required to install it on your property. It must comply with all of the pertinent regulations such as setbacks and ability to resist wind, earthquakes, and snow loads. There may also be energy requirements that look at the thermal envelope of a heated structure, the mechanical and lighting systems. (*See Permit Exemptions handout for further information.*)

If you need a building permit, you must provide details for the foundation, framing, attachment and anchorage, and design loads. This information is available from the manufacturer for a prefabricated structure. The Residential Building Permit checklists are available from city website.



## Location

Typically, structures over 200 square feet or over 10' high will need to be set back from the property line the minimum “yard setbacks”. The yard setbacks are determined based on the zoning designation for your property.

Typical yard setbacks for single family residential zones are as follows:

Front/street: 20' from front property line. Side: 5' from property line to the eave; two sides together equal 15'.  
Rear: 15' from rear property line.

**Exception:** ONE uninhabited detached accessory structure less than 200 square feet in area (footprint) and 10' high, such as a **storage shed** or greenhouse, may be located within the required **rear or side** yard setback. The structure must maintain a fire separation distance from other structures consistent with the adopted building codes. To be considered “detached” the structure must be located a minimum of 5' from other buildings on the same lot.

If a detached accessory structure, which is less than 200 square feet in area and less than 10' high, is located in the side yard, the structure must be setback **at least five feet further than the house from any street.**

**Size Restrictions**

The International Fire Code regulates enclosed tent-type structures that are over 200 square feet. A separate permit from the Shoreline Fire Department is necessary and the structure may only be used on a temporary basis (not more than 180 days within a 12-month period on a single property). Canopies over 400 square feet also require a permit. These requirements should be verified with the Fire Department (206) 533-6500. Though structures of this type are only to be used on a temporary basis, they may still require a building permit and accordingly must meet yard setbacks and other applicable provisions of the Development Code.